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FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
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RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY 3120
RUEHJB/AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA PRIORITY 2472
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA PRIORITY 2915
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY 0044
RUEHLGB/AMEMBASSY KIGALI PRIORITY 0897
RUEHLC/AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE PRIORITY 0499
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0275
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY 0458
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0182
RUEHPL/AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS PRIORITY 1186

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TAGS: [AF](#) [PREL](#) [TZ](#)

SUBJECT: AU CHAIRMANSHIP: PRESIDENT KIKWETE WILLING TO STEP
UP, IF ASKED

REF: A. STATE 08022
[1](#)B. KAMPALA 0145

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission D. Purnell Delly for
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) A source at the State House close to President Jakaya Kikwete told the Deputy Chief of Mission the evening of January 24 that Kikwete would accept the chairmanship of the African Union (AU) "if asked" and if "requisite support" existed. At the same time, our contact added that Tanzania seemed to be on a "collision course" with the Government of Sudan (GOS) for several reasons. First and foremost, President Kikwete had been perhaps the most vocal opponent of President Bashir's chairmanship at the AU Summit in January 2006; if Kikwete were now offered and accepted this position, he would appear to have voiced such opposition in part to position himself to assume the presidency this year.

[1](#)2. (C) Moreover, in the recent past, there have been other diplomatic "skirmishes" between Tanzania and Sudan. President Bashir's government, for example, wanted the African Court of Justice to be in Sudan, but it went to Tanzania. Sudan also wanted a Sudanese to be named as Secretary General of the Great Lakes Regional secretariat

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based in Bujumbura, but that position was awarded to the former chief of the Multilateral Division of Tanzania's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Ambassador Liberata Mulamula, in December 2006. Thus, a Kikwete candidacy will be difficult for Sudan and for other African countries supporting President Bashir to readily accept.

[1](#)3. (SBU) In separate discussions January 24 with Nelson Lymio, the MFA's Acting Head of the African Division, PolCouns learned only that Tanzania does not consider President Bashir's track record over the past 12 months on Darfur and on other key issues to warrant his stepping into the AU chairmanship. Lymio declined to suggest or intimate whether a compromise candidate from another East African nation was being considered.

Comment

14. (C) President Kikwete appears to be preparing to leave for the AU Summit in Addis Ababa on January 29, one day earlier than originally planned, perhaps for side meetings to test the waters on whether indeed there would be adequate support among other African heads of state for his candidacy as the AU chair.

RETZER